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Nigel Lange
State Inspector General
Georgia Office of the State Inspector General
2 Martin Luther King Jr. Drive SE
Suite 1052 East Tower
Atlanta, GA 30334

Dear Inspector General Lange,

I am writing on behalf of Georgia Prisoners' Speak — a Georgia-based investigative journalism organization documenting conditions inside the Georgia Department of Corrections — to bring to the Office of the Inspector General a documented spending pattern within the Department of Corrections that we believe warrants OIG review under the Office's mandate to examine fraud, waste, and abuse in state agencies.

The State of Georgia spends **$0.53 per meal** feeding 53,000 incarcerated adults. By the state's own budget, the Department of Corrections will spend **$31 million** next year on food and **$432 million** on medical care for the people it has malnourished. The medical line has grown 33% in four years. The food line has grown 1%. Per inmate per year: $583 on food, $8,074 on medical — a ratio of roughly fourteen to one.

To put $0.53 in context: the U.S. Department of Agriculture currently reimburses Georgia public schools approximately **$4.40** for a single free school lunch. **The State of Georgia feeds the children of its citizens at roughly eight times the per-meal rate it feeds the adults it has taken into custody.**

These are not abstractions. The photographs on the next page are real meals served on real days at real Georgia state prisons — one from each of the three daily services. **A typical lunch:** wilted iceberg lettuce, a sealed mayonnaise packet, a slice of processed cheese with a mustard packet, and a tortilla folded around a small portion of diced lunchmeat. **A typical dinner:** canned vegetables, white rice, and two pieces of unidentifiable meat. **A typical breakfast:** a few spoonfuls of scrambled eggs, a portion of grits, and a slab of yellow cake — cake because sugar adds calories cheaply.

A typical lunch: wilted iceberg, sealed mayonnaise packet, slice of cheese with mustard, and a tortilla with diced lunchmeat.

A typical dinner: canned vegetables, white rice, and two unidentifiable pieces of meat.

A typical breakfast: scrambled eggs, grits, and a slab of yellow cake.

What the state itself does not provide is supplemented only by what families and inmates can afford to purchase from the prison commissary. There, a package of ramen noodles that retails outside the wall for roughly twenty cents costs ninety cents — a markup of roughly 350 percent on the cheapest staple in the American grocery store. The available items are overwhelmingly sugar, refined flour, and salt: honey buns, snack pies, chips, soda, processed pastries. Meaningful protein is effectively absent from the commissary inventory. **The state under-feeds the population, then sells junk food to the families of the incarcerated at usurious markup, and then bills the public for the diabetes, hypertension, and cardiovascular disease that follow.** This is the cost cascade in three steps.

We respectfully request that the Office consider opening a review of GDC food-service and commissary contract administration, and the broader fiscal pattern in which the Department’s food line has grown 1% in

four years while its medical line has grown 33% during the same period. The fourteen-to-one ratio between per-inmate medical and food spending — with documented downstream chronic-disease consequences — is the kind of preventable-cost pattern OIG mandates require be examined. We will furnish the underlying budget citations, photographs from inside GDC kitchens, mortality cross-checks, and source access on request.

The full body of our reporting on Georgia prison food, nutrition, and the cost cascade is collected at **gps.press/food/**.

Thank you for your attention to this record. We will follow up by email within fourteen days.

Respectfully,

[redacted]
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